

AGENDA Minutes

Statutory Council on Blindness Meeting

September 23-24, 2013

September 23, 2013 – 2:00 PM-6:00 PM

A. 2:00 PM Call the Meeting to Order

- Council Chair (Roberto Torrez) called meeting to order at 2:15 PM. Tom Langham and Jo Grove arrived at 2:20. Lee Young arrived at 2:45 PM.
- Members present: Roberto Torrez, Bill Gallik, Jo Ann Gustavson, Janet Dickey, Eleanor Loomans, John Hartman, Doug Tikkanen, Jo Grove, Lee Young
- OBVI staff present: Linda Huffer, Tom Langham, Ana Detert

B. 2:05 PM Introduction of Members

- Chairperson Torrez introduces himself and the new members to the Council. New Council members are Jo Ann Gustavson, Doug Tikkanen, and Janet Dickey. Jo Grove was also approved for renewed membership.
- OBVI Agency Contact Linda Huffer announces her retirement and introduces Tom Langham, who will take over for her as interim director in her absence.

C. 2:30 PM Approve Council Meeting Minutes of June 25, 2013

- Eleanor Loomans name was spelled incorrectly in a few locations. These should be corrected.
- Eleanor Loomans had some concerns with the grammar in a number of places but will speak with Ana Detert regarding these corrections at a later date.
- **Motion: Chairperson Torrez moved to approve the June meeting minutes. Jo Grove seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

Approve Executive Committee Minutes of September 19, 2013

- Chairperson Torrez explains the difference between the meeting minutes for the June and September meetings.
- **Motion: Chairperson Torrez moved to approve the September Executive Committee Meeting minutes. Eleanor Loomans seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

C. 2:40 PM Recruitment Plan – Bill Gallik

- Chairperson Torrez explained that Joanne Schehl contacted him on August 5 to resign from her position on the Council due to health issues.
- In order to have a full nine-person Council, one person will need to be recruited to fill Joanne's seat.
- No Council members had anybody to recommend at the time.
 - Bill Gallik suggested sending out a public announcement again in hopes of finding an appropriate recruit.
 - Doug Tikkanen suggested sourcing people for the Council instead of sending out a public announcement.
 - Jo Grove suggested that the Council considers finding a person associated with the Lion's Club to join the group.
 - No concrete decisions were made among the group for a recruitment strategy. The same nominating committee that was formed in June for recruitment will work together again to find a new member.

- Current nominating committee members: Bill Gallik, Jo Grove, Eleanor Loomans
- Chairperson Torrez asked Doug Tikkanen if he would join the nominating committee as well.
- **Motion: Chairperson Torrez moved to add Doug Tikkanen to the nominating committee. Janet Dickey seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

D. 2:55 PM Public Comments

- No public comments at this time.

E. 3:00 PM Update Research Study Report and Working Session – Josephine Grove

- Jo Grove explained the purpose of the research study for the new Council members.
 - Originally the Council was planning to distribute a survey to help identify the needs that the blind and visually impaired community in Wisconsin find important. Distribution of the survey became logistically complicated, so Jo suggested doing a research study.
 - As part of her dissertation, Jo decided to change her study topic from difficulties faced by blind college students to encompass the wider blind and visually impaired community. While she must do the majority of the work, she asked the Council members to help her gather information for her study.
- Jo Grove posed the question to the Council, “What do you see as the major problem facing the blind and visually impaired in Wisconsin?”
- Jo Grove explained the process she plans to use to gather information.
 - Delphi Study: Consists of two groups of participants.
 - Pilot Group: The first group to take the survey and provide feedback. The information gathered from this group will be used to help tweak and work out the kinks in the survey.
 - Panel of Experts: 12-15 people who don’t know each other. Generally these are people who are heads of agencies or committees that work closely with the blind and visually impaired community.
 - The two groups participate in three rounds of surveys. Each round is used to develop the survey for the round after it.
 - After all rounds of surveys are completed, the data is analyzed and used to make recommendations.
- Tom Langham asked if Jo was planning to look at the blind community as one uniform group or if she was planning to split into sub-groups and demographics.
 - Jo Grove was uncertain at the time and hoped that the current discussion would help to narrow the range of her research group.
 - Chairperson Torrez asked if they could look at multiple perspectives
 - Perspective of those who are blind and those who work with the blind
 - John Hartman asked if they should differentiate between people who were born with vision loss and people who lost their vision as adults.
- Linda Huffer suggested that the Council consider deciding what they feel the major problem the blind community is facing and then narrowing the group.
 - John Hartman suggested most important was access to resources and services for the blind and visually impaired and finding ways to inform the community of what services are available.
 - Jo Ann Gustavson said transportation was the biggest issue, especially for those living in small towns and rural areas.
 - Chairperson Torrez added that it would be unfair to pick and choose certain demographics and that employment was the most important issue among the blind community.

- He tied in Jo Ann's concerns with transportation by stating that in order to have or keep a job, a person must have a reliable means of transportation.
- Lee Young agreed with Chairperson Torrez and added that because of misconceptions about a person's ability to do a job well if one can't see and because adaptive technologies required by the blind to be able to effectively perform their job duties are so expensive, it is extremely difficult for blind or visually impaired people to obtain employment. She also suggested that there needs to be DVR workers who specialize in blindness to help blind people find good jobs.
- Doug Tikkanen also expressed agreement with Chairperson Torrez's and Lee Young's opinions.
- John Hartman and Eleanor Loomans believed that the lack of available services for the blind and knowledge of those services, and the lack of a comprehensive rehabilitation program for the blind are the overarching issues that encompass all other issues that had been discussed.
 - Services lead to all other branches. Delivery of services comes after knowing what those services are. The blind and visually impaired community need to know what services are available and what the gaps are in those services. Knowing those services creates a step-by-step process to move forward in transportation, employment, education, etc.
 - Available services works across all age groups.
 - Different ages can pick and choose services depending on individual problems.
- Chairperson Torrez wrapped up the discussion by stating that it was helpful for the Council because they can use the compiled information to apply to issues they deal with in the future.
- Jo Grove told the Council that they should be on the lookout for an email of compiled information and in 6-8 weeks a request to participate in her pilot group.

F. 4:00 PM Sub-Committees, Explanation and Incorporations

- Chairperson Torrez explained the various sub-committees and asked new members if they would like to join any of them.
- Current sub-committee membership:
 - Employment: Roberto Torrez (committee chair), Lee Young, John Hartman, Bill Gallik
 - Transportation: Bill Gallik (committee chair), John Hartman, Roberto Torrez
 - Public Relations and Information Access: Eleanor Loomans (committee chair), Jo Grove
- Tom Langham asked if an individual outside the Council may participate in sub-committees.
 - Must follow procedures to amend Council bylaws.
- **Motions were made and carried unanimously to add new members to existing sub-committees.**
 - **Janet Dickey joined the Employment and Public Relations Committees**
 - **Doug Tikkanen joined the Employment Committee**
 - **Jo Ann Gustavson joined the Transportation Committee**
- Bill Gallik would like to push to educate consumers on transportation services and how to use them efficiently.
- Jo Grove would like to begin a project to work with churches to find volunteer drivers.

G. 4:30 PM Planning November 19th meeting with the SenseAbility Team of DVR 11:00AM – 4:00PM

- Ana Detert read message from Enid Glenn at DVR to the Council inviting representatives from the Council to the next SenseAbility Team meeting in Madison on November 19th.

- Chairperson Torrez said that he had never seen a more genuine and receptive response to Council concerns.
- Volunteers to attend meeting: Roberto Torrez, Jo Grove, Lee Young, Doug Tikkanen, Tom Langham, Janet Dickey, Bill Gallik.
- Eleanor Loomans and John Hartman unable to attend meeting but would like to be part of the planning process.
- Lee Young suggested having a phone conference prior to the meeting to discuss issues and prepare a plan.
 - A planning teleconference was scheduled for October 22, 9:00-11:00 AM.

H. 4:45PM Other Councils – Reports:

1. Governor's Council on People with Disabilities - John Hartman
 - Working with Carrie Molke (BADR Bureau Director) on how ADRCs can be set up to provide resources and to set up training and education more efficiently and at the right level of needs.
 - Kitty Rhoades, DHS Secretary, told Council that she is open to innovation/changes and making sure systems are useful to disabilities. New, fresh ideas for services.
 - Talked about updates from Independent Living Councils
 - Discussed Survival Coalition
 - Coalition of disabled groups trying to get all other groups to buy into their vision.
2. Assistive Technology Council - Roberto Torrez
 - Nothing to report
3. Rehabilitation Advisory Council (RAC)
 - No current members of SCOB are a part of this Council.
 - Lee Young expressed interest in joining this Council.
4. Physical Disabilities Council (PDC) – Eleanor Loomans
 - Nothing to report
5. Wisconsin Council of the Blind & VI (WCB&VI) - Jo Grove
 - At the recent annual meeting nine \$1500 scholarships were given out.
 - Next year the Council is planning to give out more.
 - Began planning for 2014 Legislative Day
 - Would SCOB like to plan in collaboration with the WCB&VI?
6. Vision Forward Association
 - No current SCOB members are part of this association.
7. American Council of the Blind (ACB)
 - No current SCOB members are part of this Council.
8. National Federation of the Blind Wis (NFBW) – Lee Young
 - At the time of the meeting Lee Young was hoping to hear from the president and be able to give a report the next day.
9. Board for People with Developmental Disabilities
 - The Board has an annual “Take Your Legislator to Work Day”
 - Very informative for legislators to learn about how people with disabilities work.
 - Maureen Ryan or Beth Moss are the contact for this Board.

I. 5:00 PM White Cane Safety Day Activities – Eleanor Loomans

- Council members decided to table this discussion until the next morning, as some Council members had already left for the day.

Motion: Chairperson Torrez moved to adjourn meeting at 5:51 PM. Lee Young seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

September 24, 2013 – 8:00 AM-12:30 PM

J. 8:00 AM Call Meeting to Order and Review Items

- Chairperson Torrez called the meeting to order at 8:10 AM. Present members and staff were the same as the previous day. BADR Director Carrie Molke was also present.
- Chairperson Torrez told members that Enid Glenn would be unable to attend the meeting to make a DVR report but confirmed that the DVR meeting in November would be taking place in Madison.
- Chairperson Torrez opened up the floor for discussion on White Cane Safety Day, which was tabled from the previous day's meeting.
 - Eleanor Loomans told the group that White Cane Safety Day is on October 15 and explained that the purpose is to raise awareness of the public in how to respond to people with white canes.
 - Ideas for different activities to plan for future years were discussed, including:
 - Tie a red ribbon around a white pipe cleaner and deliver to offices of lawmakers
 - Having school children participate by drawing white canes and making posters for the event
 - Conducting story time at the library to raise awareness among children
 - Putting together presentations for church
 - Writing newspaper articles
 - Television or radio interviews with local stations
 - Tom Langham shared about the White Cane Flash Mob that was planned for White Cane Day in Milwaukee and suggested that the Council begin planning activities for White Cane Safety Day much earlier than they had in the past.
 - **Motion: Lee Young moved to develop a sub-committee for White Cane Safety Day with Eleanor Loomans as the committee chair. Jo Ann Gustavson seconded and the motions passed unanimously.**
 - Planning committee members: Eleanor Loomans (committee chair), Lee Young, Jo Ann Gustavson

K. 8:10 AM OBVI Report – Linda Huffer and Thomas Langham

- Tom Langham reported on OBVI's recent collaboration with the Wisconsin Lion's Camp.
 - Half-day trial in June and one-week camp on September 8-13 were both a success.
 - OBVI is planning to do both the one-day workshop and week-long camp again in the future, providing that the Office can find available funding for the programs.
 - No cost to the consumer, except for travel.
 - Age range for September camp was 30-87.
 - June camp was open to anybody 18 or older.
 - Office is planning to ask the Lions to put these camps on as a partnership, which would bring down the cost and create stability in the program.
- Carrie Molke, Director of the Bureau of Aging and Disability Resources, introduced herself.
 - Has only been Bureau Director for three months
 - Asked Council members to share with her their thoughts and concerns
 - Things to be aware of, advice, needs of consumers, etc.
- Tom Langham explained the contract that OBVI has with the VA in Milwaukee to provide orientation and mobility training to veterans in their homes.

L. 8:40 AM Sub-Committees Planning Session

Transportation – Bill Gallik

- Bill Gallik reported that Logisticare is being taken over by MTM.
- Committee had a recent teleconference to discuss issues.

Employment – Roberto Torrez

- Chairperson Torrez reported on ongoing work with DVR.
- Discussed federal government initiative to hire people who are disabled.
 - Supposed to be a designated individual to assist people who are disabled to apply for and obtain jobs within each Federal Department.
 - Why doesn't Wisconsin have a policy like this?
- Planned to get together in the near future to put together an action plan for project to address unemployment issues.
 - Doug Tikkanen volunteered to create a written initiative to send to the Committee.

Public Relations & Information Access – Eleanor Loomans

- Eleanor Loomans asked Ana Detert to add April 9 and June 25 meeting minutes to the SCOB website, as well as an updated Council roster.
- Information on Newline is very outdated.
 - Eleanor Loomans told other committee members to send Cheryl Orgus in Milwaukee any information that they would like posted or deleted from the website.

M. 10:00 AM DVR Report - Enid Glenn, Director - Bureau of Management Services, DWD/Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR liaison to the SCOB)

- Enid Glenn was unable to attend the meeting and did not send a DVR report for the Council to discuss.

N. 10:45 AM Election of Officers

- Chairperson
 - Jo Grove nominated Roberto Torrez to continue his role as Chairperson. Roberto accepted the nomination. Lee Young seconded the nomination and Council members voted unanimously to approve.
- Vice-Chairperson
 - Jo Grove nominated John Hartman, but John resigned from Executive Board and may resign from the Council in the future due to time constraints.
 - Lee Young nominated Janet Dickey, but Janet did not accept the nomination.
 - Jo Grove nominated Bill Gallik, who accepted the nomination. Janet Dickey seconded the nomination and all Council members voted to approve.
- Secretary
 - Janet Dickey nominated Lee Young, but Lee did not accept the nomination.
 - Eleanor Loomans nominated Jo Grove. Jo initially accepted the nomination but withdrew upon the nomination of Jo Ann Gustavson.
 - Roberto Torrez nominated Jo Ann Gustavson, who accepted the nomination. Lee Young seconded the nomination and the Council voted unanimously to approve.
- Member-at-Large
 - Jo Ann Gustavson nominated Doug Tikkanen, who accepted the nomination. Eleanor Loomans seconded the nomination and John thirdded.
 - Lee Young expressed interest in remaining in the position and nominated herself.
 - The Council voted by confidential ballot to approve Doug Tikkanen as the new Member-at-Large.
- John Hartman resigned from his position as liaison to the Governor's Council on Disabilities. Jo Grove recommended Lee Young take John's place, and Lee volunteered to do so.
- Chairperson Torrez extended his sincerest thanks to Linda Huffer for many years given to the group and welcomed Tom Langham as new agency contact.

O. 11:15 AM Next meeting: Schedule December 2013 Date

- The next SCOB meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 16, from 10:00 AM-4:00 PM.

P. 11:45 PM Lunch

Q. 12:30 PM Meeting Adjourned

- **Motion: Chairperson Torrez moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:43 PM. The Council members voted unanimously to pass the motion.**